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# Who Do You Think You Are? Kate Poore

Devon O'Brien  
*Iowa State University*

Briana Wengert  
*Iowa State University*

Yue Wu  
*Iowa State University*

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WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?

# KATE POORE

BY DEVON O'BRIEN DESIGN BRIANA WENGERT PHOTO YUEWU

A kingdom reigns in the Midwest: the Kingdom of Calontir. Kate Poore, or Katherine of Arles as known by her lads and ladies, leads Iowa State's Medieval Re-Creationist Club (MRC) as part of this kingdom. The sophomore in history gives us the lowdown of the Middle Ages existing in the 21st century.

## Ethos: How did you become part of the club?

**Kate Poore:** The club is affiliated with a worldwide organization called the Society for Creative Anachronism (SCA) ... we try to recreate the appeal of the Middle Ages—the chivalry, the clothing and the pomp and circumstance as well. But we try to avoid the Plague and we have indoor plumbing, which is also nice. I've been part of the SCA as it were since I was born.

## E: What do you do as a club?

**KP:** As a club we try to give the students a chance to participate in SCA events. Like, we tell them all about the stuff, we try to get them somewhat as prepared as it were. We get them clothing ... if they want to learn how to fight we help them fight, we have loaner gear for fighting, we have loaner garb to wear to events, we like to educate people. Our big thing is educating and telling people we want to have fun as well.

## E: So what are the events then?

**KP:** There [are] all sorts of [varieties] of events. There's fighting events, there's arts and sciences, which is our more cultural thing—the sewing, the metal working, the woodworking, cooking, we do a lot of cooking, brewing, anything you could think of a person in the Middle Ages doing, you could do it. Except the whole killing thing.

## E: Do Renaissance fairs fall into that?

**KP:** Yeah, we do somewhat participate in Renaissance fairs. How the Renaissance fairs differ from what I do is the Renaissance fairs you pay to get in and then you pay them to get stuff that they make. What we do is you pay to get into an event and then we try to teach you different things—how to sew, how to cook, how to fight. What we do for fighting is, there are times it can be dangerous, but not really. We wear enough armor and you should be set to go fight as it were.

## E: Is that like LARPing then?

**KP:** We are not LARPers. While we have a role-playing aspect, we are not fantasy based. LARPers have wizards, they have orcs, they have magic, we do not. We are more realistic in our game. It is a game and we play it. The LARPers and the MRC here on campus have had ... a very touchy, odd relationship. We've had issues with the LARPers, they have had issues with us, it's been kind of bad. But for the most part we will stay out of their issues, they will stay out of ours.

## E: Is your kingdom governed?

**KP:** Yeah, we have a king and queen who reign for about six months and then they step down. There is a prince and princess, the prince and princess are only the prince and princess for one to three months depending on the kingdom. How to become prince or princess or king or queen is you have to fight in a Crown Tourney. Whoever comes out the winner is the prince.

## E: So you battle with swords?

**KP:** We don't fight with metal swords, we fight with rattan, which is a cousin of bamboo—it looks like bamboo on the outside but it's solid.

When you put it together we put duct tape over it to create a blade and then you could put a handle on it and it gives the weight of an actual sword without the deadliness. We participate in tournaments, we participate in melees. Melees are five plus people on a side fighting each other.

## E: What's the typical reaction you get when you tell someone you are the president of the MRC?

**KP:** Do you guys like the movie, "Role Models?" Then I try to steer them toward "A Knight's Tale."

## E: What's the best food that you eat at a feast?

**KP:** We always have bread and butter on all the tables ... there's a saying, "When in doubt at a feast, you can always eat the bread." Because many times the food can be very bland.

## E: So the giant turkey leg, is that just a cliché?

**KP:** Yes and no. For us it can be a cliché but in medieval times the whole eating a giant turkey leg has been found to be proven true. We do eat with utensils, although there are times when we don't.

## E: Where do dragons fit into the picture?


**KP:** They don't.

For more information on the Medieval Re-Creationist Club we sent Ethos reporter Ben Theobald to a meeting. To read about his experience among the noble knights and fair maidens visit [ethosmagazine.org](http://ethosmagazine.org).



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